

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY, MD – Congressman Steny Hoyer (MD-05) today hosted the 5th Congressional District Federal Small Business Forum in conjunction with the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), the Small Business Administration (SBA) and local small business organizations. The forum helped educate local small businesses on how to gain contracts with the federal government and provided an opportunity for them to market their work and to make valuable new connections. Hoyer welcomed approximately two hundred regional small businesses, chambers and economic development organizations to the event.

“This conference had one simple goal – to provide as much valuable information about working with the federal government as possible,” said Hoyer today. “Working with the General Services Administration, we organized three panels of experts to discuss key small business topics that are relevant to the local economy. Additionally, the exhibition hall features representatives of twenty federal agencies, small business offices and regional small business organizations.

“I am a strong supporter of small business and recognize its importance to our nation and Maryland’s economic well being. Small businesses are truly the engine of America’s economy. For example, small business represent over 99 percent of employers nationwide, account for half of our gross domestic product, pay 44 percent of the total private payroll and create three out of every four jobs nationally. There are nearly 25 million small businesses in the U.S. and nearly 500,000 in Maryland alone. I hope that this forum will help ensure that our local small businesses are even more successful in working with the federal government in the coming months and years,” concluded Hoyer.

The federal marketplace accounts for approximately \$285 billion and according to the Federal Procurement Data System nearly \$20 billion in federal contracting went to the State of Maryland in Fiscal Year 2004.

The forum lasted for a half day and featured three hour-long targeted panel discussions, designed in conjunction with the GSA, as well as an exhibition hall.

The first panel spotlighted technology and the federal government’s information technology needs. The second panel detailed GSA’s Public Buildings Service and how private property owners can take advantage of the federal leasing program. It outlined the types of space GSA ordinarily leases, the lease terms and conditions, how to offer space to GSA, how GSA awards leases, and whom to contact for additional information. The final panel covered marketing

strategies, and gave a broader overview of how small businesses can work with the federal government and what resources are available to help. SBA and GSA officials also discussed how small businesses can maximize their opportunities in doing business with the federal government.

The exhibit hall featured twenty displays from federal agencies and local small business organizations.

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